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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 000649

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TAGS: [PINR](#) [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: BIO OF NEW IRAQI MINISTRY OF INTERIOR INSPECTOR
GENERAL

Classified By: Rule of Law Coordinator James Yellin for Reason 1.4 (d).

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: On January 2, 2006, Aqil Said was appointed as the new Inspector General (IG) for the Ministry of Interior (MOI). He told us that he had lived in Iran, Syria, Lebanon and Denmark. Members of the IG staff claim that Said is likely to be a puppet of the Minister of Interior, but we do not yet know whether this criticism is justified. In any event, without financial support and political empowerment, any IG will probably be unable to deal effectively with corruption, human rights abuses and other forms of improper or illegal behavior. END SUMMARY.

BIOGRAPHY

¶2. (SBU) According to Said, he was born in 1964 in Karbala, where his father still lives. He grew up and was educated in Iraq and holds a law degree from an Iraqi institution. After graduating from law school, he worked in Iran for six years as a journalist and radio broadcaster. (NOTE: He did not specify the years, but the time frame would be from around 1986 to 1992. END NOTE.)

¶3. (SBU) Again according to Said, from 1992 to 1995, he lived in Syria and Lebanon, where he continued to work as a journalist. (He says he had residences in both places at the same time.) In 1995 he moved to Denmark, where his wife and three children (boys, ages 7, 14, and 17) still reside. He came back to Iraq during the CPA, when he was chosen to be one of the members of the "leader committee" of the National Assembly.

¶4. (SBU) Said is Shia. He claims to have left the Dawa party after ten years of affiliation and to now be an "independent and modern Iraqi." In addition to his native Arabic, he speaks Danish and very little English. He has had no formal IG training.

IG STAFF MEMBERS CRITICIZE SAID

¶5. (C) On February 11, 2006, Emboff met with Major Saad Maan and Saadi Ali, who have been members of the staff of the IG of the MOI for three years. Their impression of the new IG was less than favorable. Maan and Ali said that:

-- Said has both the personal charisma and professional energy for the job. But his connections to the Dawa party are undeniable and have already caused problems in the IG office.

-- He is very close to Minister of Interior Baqir Jabr, who is a member of SCIRI, and to Adnan al-Assadi, the Deputy Minister of Administration for the MOI, who is a member of

Dawa. Said serves as a puppet of, and not a check-and-balance on, the Minister of Interior. He also serves as an extension of the reach into the IG office of al-Assadi, who is close to Jabr, and to Prime Minister Ibrahim Jafari.

-- Immediately upon taking office, Said transferred 17 members of the IG staff into other directorates, because he wants all of his staff to be Dawa members and to have served previously as police, according to Maan and Ali.

OUR INITIAL IMPRESSIONS

16. (C) Embassy officers met with Said for several hours on February 13, 2006. Our initial impressions are that Said is polished and charming, and politically savvy enough to tell us what he thinks we want to hear. He spent a great deal of time stating that he would like to ensure cultural diversity in his IG office by including Shia, Sunni, Kurds, Turks and women. He also talked at length about his plans to fight corruption and human rights abuses, but his description of the plans lacked substance and detail.

17. (C) He also said that he plans to bring the Internal Affairs Office back under the control of the IG. (NOTE: The Internal Affairs Office was separated out during the tenure of his predecessor, Major General Nuri al-Nuri. END NOTE.)

18. (C) When queried as to whether he had transferred staff members upon coming into office, he said no. He also asserted that the office of the MOI IG had been corrupted.

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COMMENT

19. (C) COMMENT: We cannot yet make an independent evaluation of Said and do not know whether the criticism of Said by members of the IG staff is justified. In any event, until the IG offices across all ministries in Iraq are financially independent and politically empowered, any Inspector General will probably be unable to deal effectively with corruption, human rights abuses and other forms of improper or illegal behavior. END COMMENT.
SATTERFIELD